

**MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR MEETING
ASHLAND CITY COUNCIL
October 4, 2016
Council Chambers
1175 E. Main Street**

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Stromberg called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Civic Center Council Chambers.

ROLL CALL

Councilor Voisin, Morris, Lemhouse, Seffinger, Rosenthal, and Marsh were present.

MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Stromberg announced a vacancy on the Public Arts Commission.

He recently toured Asante Hospital and noted a presentation regarding the hospital would occur at a future Council meeting.

Mayor Stromberg requested Council postpone the Downtown Beautification Project update under New & Miscellaneous Business to the October 18, 2016 Council meeting due to new information. City Attorney Dave Lohman clarified recent email correspondence sent to Council regarding tree removal was not a part of the discussion. The project focused on the southeast corner of Pioneer Street and Lithia Way. Councilor Lemhouse further clarified there was not a plan for the lot on Pioneer Street and no plan to remove the trees.

Councilor Rosenthal/Lemhouse m/s to postpone the Downtown Beautification Project update until the October 18, 2016 Council meeting. DISCUSSION: Councilor Rosenthal thought it was worthwhile to take the two weeks for possible consensus building. Councilor Lemhouse supported listening to more ideas and finding a solution. Councilor Voisin wanted the discussion to be public for transparency. Mayor Stromberg responded the meeting was a technical meeting involving staff and contractors and would not involve the public. He would report to Council with substantive information. Councilor Seffinger expressed concern how people were currently utilizing the corner and wanted that considered as well. **Voice Vote: Councilor Morris, Lemhouse, Seffinger, Rosenthal, and Marsh, AYES; Councilor Voisin, NAY. Motion passed 5-1.**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the Study Session of September 19, 2016, Business Meeting of September 20, 2016 and Executive Session of September 20, 2016 were approved as presented.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS & AWARDS

General Manager for the Mt. Ashland Association, Hiram Towle gave an update on what was happening at Mt. Ashland Ski Resort along with the year in review. During the 2015-2016 winter, Mt. Ashland Ski Resort was open for 88 days and 22 nights. The average was 90 days. The ski resort had 68,860 skier visits falling short of the resort's ongoing goal of 70,000. The mountain received 23-feet of snow over the winter. Mt. Ashland achieved record revenues in 2016 of nearly \$2,500,000 since it began the five day a week operations. The Snow Sports Department taught 4,000 adults and children to ski and snowboard. The after school program saw approximately 1,000 students. Retail, food, and beverage excelled with retail surpassing revenue projections by \$56,000. The 7500' Crew was a program partially funded by College Dreams where students who have no prior work experience work half day then have the option to ski or take a lesson the rest of day at no charge. There were multiple volunteer days focused on various tasks and projects.

For the 2016-2017 season, they hoped to open Saturday, December 10, 2016. Long-range forecasts were looking favorable. The ski resort was prepared to operate on low snow if necessary. They were looking into improving the rental shop and updating rental equipment. They installed a 28K solar system that will offset 12% of the resort's electric usage. The resort would also open the Bistro weekends and holidays to address long lines experienced in the Café last year. They were looking into remodeling the ski lodge within its current footprint to better direct and serve customers as well as improve operations. He described the resort's learn to ski programs for children, adults, and seniors.

The ski resort used a Ski Hopper shuttle van that ran from Medford, Phoenix, and Ashland. They were working on improving shuttle times and days and looking for sponsors to fund the service.

Council appreciated the comprehensive report and the positive improvements that had occurred at the resort.

Ron Roth/6950 Hwy 99/Shared his 40 years' experience with Mt. Ashland as a food provider and a board member. He suggested a Mt. Ashland summit meeting sponsored by Mt. Ashland Association and co-sponsored by the City that would also involve environmental groups. He wanted the City to contribute \$100,000 to the Mt. Ashland Association contingent on the ski resort returning to a seven-day operation. He noted the benefits of running the resort seven days instead of five.

PUBLIC FORUM

Caroline Shaffer/288 Morton Street/Spoke regarding the sewage incident in her home almost one year ago. Vendors and creditors were pushing for payment that could mean bankruptcy for them. She asked Council to provide assistance and advocacy regarding the matter.

Huelz Gutcheon/2253 Hwy 99/Spoke on the rising property values, and the willingness of the people moving to town to pay higher housing costs, and questioned Ashland's ability to handle the influx. The increase in population decreased the happiness index and affected quality of life. He suggested Ashland replace old houses with zero net energy times two autonomous homes and suspected property values would increase even more.

CONSENT AGENDA

- 1. Minutes of boards, commissions, and committees**
- 2. Liquor license application for Brian Dunagan dba Ashland Wine Cellar**
- 3. Appointment of Piper Von Chamier to the Historic Commission**
- 4. Adoption of Denial Findings for 150 North Pioneer Street zone change request**
- 5. Award of Bid to Vitus Construction for Improvements to Garfield Park**

Jason Minica, the project manager for Parks and Recreation explained the Garfield Park project would convert the basketball court to a regular sized arena, refurbish the volleyball courts to regulation-sized courts, add a Cascade-Siskiyou Scenic Bikeway shelter, two picnic shelters, and enhance the splash pad as well as miscellaneous improvements. Parks and Recreation Director Michael Black added staff bonded \$850,000 through the revenue stream received from the Food and Beverage Tax. They ended up creating a master plan for the park and were able to afford all the upgrades with the bond.

Councilor Rosenthal/Lemhouse m/s to approve the Consent Agenda. Voice Vote: all AYES. Motion passed.

PUBLIC HEARINGS None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS None

NEW AND MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

1. Downtown Beautification Project Update

Item postponed to the October 18, 2016 Council Meeting.

ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS AND CONTRACTS None

OTHER BUSINESS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS/REPORTS FROM COUNCIL LIAISONS

Councilor Lemhouse noted the Ashland High School Volleyball Dig Pink Breast Cancer Awareness fundraiser was currently happening for a local schoolteacher fighting breast cancer.

Councilor Voisin announced an update by Julie Akins on Tracking the Homeless Crisis from Seattle to LA would occur October 11, 2016 from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Ashland Library.

Councilor Seffinger attended the Smart Cities Conference in Washington DC and would provide information to Council and post it on the City website as well.

Councilor Rosenthal announced the Climate and Energy Action Plan ad Hoc Committee meeting would occur October 5, 2016 at 3:30 p.m. in the Siskiyou Room at 51 Winburn Way with another meeting Saturday October 15, 2016 from 9:00 a.m. until noon.

Councilor Marsh announced Saturday, October 8, 2016 was the Green Bag Drive at the Ashland Emergency Food Bank. She was grateful to the community for participating in the program.

ADJOURNMENT OF BUSINESS MEETING

Meeting adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

Barbara Christensen, City Recorder

John Stromberg, Mayor